

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

As a long standing customer of Dish Network, who signed up to get away from the seemingly endless increases and poor service that cable offered me, I again URGE the Justice Dept, the FCC and all Federal Regulators to support the merger of Echostar and Direct-TV for the benefit of all consumers nationwide. It is obvious to the consumer that Cable has the monopoly on the tv industry as the market now stands. While one would argue that the proposed merger would leave many areas with only 1 satellite provider, the fact is in most markets today, markets are only served with 1 cable provider, a provider who knows that they are the only source of complete service in the markets they serve and they actively take advantage of that fact. Cable rates have risen at a near 30% in the past few years while satellite has only risen 3-5%. However, satellite is often NOT the choice made by much of the public, as satellite cannot offer local tv in many areas and the current outline of the SHVA will not allow the beaming of distant networks to much of the US. For satellite to compete, it must be brought up to a level playing field with cable which means local service for ALL. This is not possible without the merger. May I suggest you dispel any concerns about monopolies by perhaps suggesting Echostar give up some of its orbital slots to others. I have read that Comcast would perhaps be interested in acquiring satellite space. Americans deserve a choice in tv today and this is not possible given current constraints without the merger. This new larger company would have the ability to offer local tv to all of America thus allowing a true alternative to cable and finally bringing cable quality tv to Rural America where many are not completely served today. This merger is not bad for America, but rather a good solution to the problems we all face against the 'cable giants'. Please do not stifle competition to cable and do not give in to the powerful cable lobbyists. Allow this merger to become a reality.

Sincerely,

Stephen Hilton
1944 Fairwood lane
State College, PA 16803